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Kauffmann, R. M.

Some recollections of the
upper Ammonoosuc Valley





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SOME RECOLLECTIONS

of

THE UPPER AMMONOOSUC

VALLEY

*To my old and valued friend and
one-time fellow camper,*

Polly Jones,

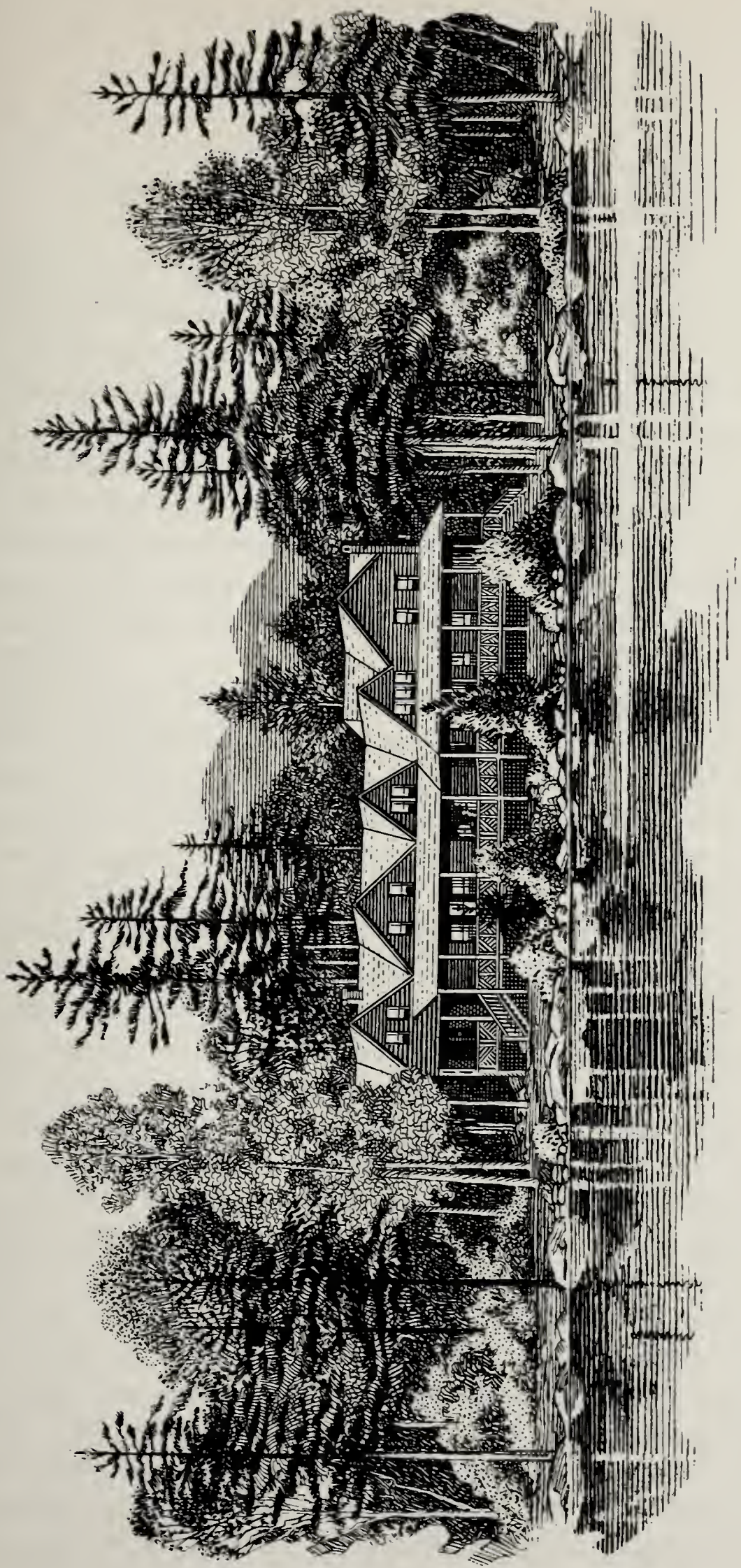
*who appreciated this remote and
secluded little valley, with the
compliments of "the author."*

R. M. Kauffmann

R. M. Kauffmann

1948

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SOME RECOLLECTIONS
OF
THE UPPER AMMONOOSUC VALLEY

The writer of these random recollections of more than six decades sets them forth in printed form not because he thinks they have any literary merit but because he is their possessor. It is unusual for a man to have summered so constantly for such a length of years in one spot. His remembrances are factual and are likely to be of interest to his immediate family. It may be that they will have a wider appeal among the group whose good fortune it has been to summer in the same place. Many of the items have been heard before throughout the years, but here they are put together for whatever they may be worth.

The writer has used the phrase "The Upper Ammonoosuc Valley" because Camp Percy on Christine Lake in the town of Stark is in that valley and the acquaintance of all the campers has run some distance up and down it. It is in that part of New Hampshire called "The North Country" and for the first half of the writer's life was rather isolated, primitive and generally "back-woodsy". In the year 1888, when he first came there, it was exceedingly so, although in sixty years a gradual and steady change has occurred.

To begin: It is not the better known Ammonoosuc which flows through the towns of Bath, Lisbon and Littleton into the Connecticut. Early residents of New Hampshire had no hesitancy in giving the same name to two different streams, mountains or villages. The stream rises in the town of Randolph and flows through wild parts of Berlin, Milan and Stark in Coos County. From West Milan on it flows through farming country and past the settlements of Crystal, Percy and Stark to Groveton, a small mill town where it empties into the Connecticut. Its course traces, roughly, a large semi-circle. Although it is near the famous White Mountains and their resorts, it is on the unstylish side and in many ways far removed from the White Mountain country and even today is a sort of backwater. With the Androscoggin it forms a

valley throughfare between the level lands of Maine and those of the Connecticut River and through all of its course is flanked by high hills and even high mountains.

Roughly speaking, it bisects the town of Stark, the majority of whose settlements run alongside it. At the village of Percy the outlet of Christine Lake (formerly called North Pond) enters it. About a half mile to the North of Percy and upwards about 220 feet lie the lake and camp, which are well-known to most of the readers of this and so will not be described except incidentally.

The Percy Summer Club of New Hampshire, which owns all of the land surrounding this lake, was founded in 1882. The writer's grandfather, S. H. Kauffmann, was one of the original members and the first lodge that he occupied was Waterside. Next the writer's father, Rudolph Kauffmann, owned it. Now it is the property of the writer and it will, it is hoped, become the property and the summer home of his sons and grandchildren. This lodge was built originally by George P. Rowell in 1884 and shortly thereafterwards he sold it to S. H. Kauffmann.

Starting in with Camp Percy, and before considering the valley at all, the writer first came to camp with his younger sister in 1888. The place was generally as it is now, although much more simple and primitive and with but five summer lodges. The writer will not expatiate on its beauty and pleasures, which have continued for so many years. All this goes without saying, and also the sentiment which surrounds the cottage where he has lived longer than in any one place during a long life. The lodge is peopled to the mental eyes of the writer with five generations: three living, two passed on—he being in the middle of the list. The writer can close his eyes and see his loved grandparents and parents in Waterside as plainly as he can his dear wife who has shared all his pleasures since 1911, as well as his tall sons and daughters and grandchildren.

The town of Stark was named Percy until the 1830's when its name was changed to honor the hero of The Battle of Bennington. The whole tract was granted by George III to the then Earl (now Duke) of Northumberland whose family name was Percy. The next town to the northwest is called Northumberland after his earldom. Percy was settled rather



late; was incorporated in 1791, and life in this small town was always hard and still is not easy. Its land is poor and its industries few. It was settled largely from Lancaster way by hardy pioneers with such typically English names as Cole, Powell, Pike, Smith, Leavitt, Jackson, and with here and there a French-Canadian name like Massuere.

One of the four of the same surname who signed the petition for incorporation of the town was Clafford Cole, who was the great-grandfather of Charles Alvah Cole, of whom more later.

The people of Stark were, and still are, typical north countrymen, sometimes hard externally, but generally fine people underneath. They were industrious and used to hardship and privations and these traits persist, only slightly diminished, until today. There has been some infiltration of foreign people, French and Irish, but not a great deal.

The village of Percy was called Starkwater until the 1880's, for then it was rather a suburb of Stark village, two miles to the west and the largest settlement in the town. It was established and exists until today because of its unfailing flow of water from the Lake. This was used first for a very small mill and later as a watering tank for the Grand Trunk Railroad, which in 1853 replaced stage coaches. At that time the old drivers were employed as conductors and the writer can recall one or two of these as white-bearded veterans. In the 1870's lumbering operations began on quite a large scale and Percy became a busy mill town. At one time it had a bobbin mill and a saw-mill; two boarding houses, two stores, a blacksmith shop, and a number of houses, long since disappeared, and a population of perhaps 300 people. The mills had ceased operating by 1909 and the village shrank and became what it is today, literally only a water-tank town. At this writing it has a population of perhaps 65 persons and no store. However, the trains still stop there. Once there were four each day and two each night between Portland and the Province of Quebec, but now there are only two, one each way.

The lumber companies were several and the writer has never been able to get them entirely straight. There are the Percy Lumber Company, Baldwin Brothers, the Paris Realty Company, the Groveton Paper Company, and there may have been others. However, between them they owned much of the

town which is largely wooded. The writer has seen Percy Village piled high with hundreds of cords of hardwood cut during the winter on the mountains; perhaps thirty horses and many cows in the enormous company-owned barn. The residents were mostly mill hands and lumberjacks. Then, as now, mail and supplies came to camp via Percy, although only rowboats were in use for many years. It was customary for campers, especially the young ones, to go to the village often over the then rough trail and in that way the writer became well acquainted with a number of families of Percy and its vicinity, and at this writing he knows many of their grandchildren and great-grandchildren. Some of these were the Greens, O'Connors, Rogers, Emerys, Abbotts, Pikes, Montgomerys, Potters and Jacksons.

When the writer first came to Camp he naturally went out into the countryside very little. His acquaintance with the natives was first limited to those who worked at the Lake. Each lodge had a country cook and a hired man and the whole colony was under the superintendency of Stephen M. Crawford.

Stephen Meserve Crawford was one of the several sons of the famous pioneer, Ethan Allen Crawford, whose name and history need no further identification. He was a veteran of the Civil War and had been a carpenter, tin-smith and stage driver, but was particularly noted as a woodsman. George P. Rowell brought him up from Lancaster as Camp Percy's first superintendent in 1882 and there he stayed until his resignation in 1901; he died two years later. He was a "grass widower" and rather enjoyed a solitary life. He lived alone in what is the nucleus of the present Crawford Lodge during the winter, and during the summer he would usually have some young male relative help him with the work. One was Fred Crawford, a nephew. Another was a grandson, Fred Hutchinson, and still another was a grandnephew, Rollin Webb, who is now a physician in Lancaster. During the writer's very early days he met two brothers of Mr. Crawford, Ethan Allen, Jr., and William, and several of his sisters, so that he can say that he knew almost every child of Ethan Allen Crawford, who died about 1850 and whose name is now legendary.

Steve, as most campers called him, was a unique character. He had his good points and his bad ones, but in his prime he was vastly entertaining. He was nothing whatever like his

large and enormously powerful father in physique. He was slight and wiry and was an extremely handsome man with gray beard, red cheeks and snapping blue eyes.

As the writer grew older he found himself in camp more than most, staying first with one branch of the family and then another and sometimes in the lodges of friends. There was no one except his sister near his age and he was thrown a good deal into the company of Steve Crawford, who was kind enough to take a little boy with him on foot or in his light buggy on his various business and pleasure trips throughout the valley. In that way the writer slowly got to know many residents of the town and to this day can place their relationships. It is probable that as of this writing he knows more about the people of Stark and their characteristics than has any outsider since Mr. Rowell, who had taught school in the town in the 1850's and was a North Country boy himself. At the time Mr. Rowell taught he was but 16 years of age and he had pupils who were a full 20 years old. In this way he had a great background of acquaintanceship which was useful to him when he conceived the idea of starting the Percy Summer Club. The writer remembers one cold raw September day in 1904. With Mr. Rowell and Myron Cole, now Tax Collector of Stark, he was waiting for the train by the stove in the Percy waiting room. Across the room from Mr. Rowell was a man somewhat older than he, clad for the sort of day it was in a cut-away coat, rubber boots and flannel shirt and white linen yachting cap. Mr. Rowell advanced and said, "Aren't you Woodbury Cole?" The man replied briefly that he was. "Have you ever seen me before?" asked Mr. Rowell. "Not that I know of," was the laconic reply. "Mr. Cole, I boarded at your house in the year 1856 when I was teaching District School here and I can remember yet how good your wife's flapjacks were!" The old farmer beamed and said, "Well you must be George Rowell, but great God, who'd 'a thought it!"

The writer has mentioned Woodbury Cole's costume. He can recall some of the incongruous and almost incredible combinations that the older residents of Stark affected in the earlier days. Steve, for example, invariably wore a flannel shirt, a vest, but never a coat unless it was really cold, a soft slouch hat and congress gaiters when the weather was good and rubber

boots when it was bad. Only twice or thrice in his life did the writer ever see him dressed in town style. Woodbury Cole's cut-away coat has been mentioned. Ancient frock coats were also worn. George Smith, "the king of Percy" (he was the local factor of the Lumber Company for many years) nearly always wore a cut-away suit but with any kind of head-gear. The bicycling costume and flowered hat of Aunt Judith Potter (of whom more anon) had to be seen to be believed and it clad a frame weighing 240 pounds. Perhaps the habitual get-up of Benjamin Green, the village constable, is most noteworthy in recollection. Uncle Ben was short and powerful like his descendants and, although almost pure French, had a Hibernian cast of countenance. His white whiskers formed a "sunflower" fringe under his face. His upper lip was shaven. His mackinaw pants were stuffed into wool sox, often of contrasting colors. On one suspender was a large silver constable's badge. On his head were the remains of a stove-pipe hat, brim trimmed to a minimum, and a short, clay pipe smoked upside down completed the ensemble.

The farm immediately to the West of the Club land at that time was owned by a very old man named Silas Lunn who was born about 1810 and he lived to be 97 years old and could remember the great fire that denuded the Percy Peaks about 1825. Six weeks before he died he put on his snowshoes and crossed several fields to visit a neighbor. "Si" or "Sile" had faults, but as a pedestrian he was a marvel. The writer can remember at sixteen trying to keep up with him as he swung through the woods with his long staff. His spare frame was always clad in black and he affected at all times a very wide black Stetson hat. His extremely bony face was graced with a single protruding tuft of white whiskers which jutted from the point of his chin and resembled nothing so much as a whiskbroom. The Lunn farm, later the Wentworth Farm, now belongs to the wife of the writer.

In 1901, as has been stated, the job of Superintendent got beyond Steve and he resigned "by request". He had fulfilled his function, which was to get the place well started. There was no question in the mind of any member as to his successor, provided that man could be obtained. He was obtained. His name was Charles Alvah Cole, fourth in descent from an original incorporator, and he lived about two miles east of

Percy on a farm on which he was born and where he lived when death overtook him. He had been farmer, lumberjack, and "boss of the woods". He held a number of town offices and later represented Stark in the New Hampshire legislature. He was a man of little education but of tremendous strength of character as well as body, and of great dignity. All in all, no finer type of adult New Englander could easily be found. He served the club until the death of his wife in 1922 when he resigned and became Superintendent Emeritus. Alvah, as all adults called him, was in appearance quite different from Steve. He was larger and although of bony and awkward-appearing frame, his muscular strength was prodigious. The writer has heard Steve, who cordially disliked Alvah, admit that the latter was the strongest man in the town of Stark.

Alvah's father died when he was sixteen and he became the man of the family. He looked after his mother (whose spinning wheel, made for her when she was a bride, is in Waterside dining room) and helped raise the younger children; he ran the farm and played the part of the head of the house. On a trip to Nash Stream Pond in the 1870's a younger brother of Alvah's laid his leg open with an axe just after arrival over a hard trail. Realizing the boy's danger Alvah picked up his brother who weighed as much as he did and carried him home four miles straight through the woods and over parts of two mountains, part of the way over no trail, and during that journey setting him down just once. It was an incredible feat and has become a town classic. Undoubtedly he saved his brother's life for it was a terrible cut. This route lay over the foot of Long Mountain and any camper knows what that country is like. The writer recalls in 1912 a float being stranded on rocks near the lower end of the Lake. The rocks had caught in between the logs and there it hung on a slant. Will Emery, the late Dr. John E. Shady and the writer went down one morning to pry it off and tow it home. All were able-bodied men, but could accomplish nothing. Alvah came rowing up, having been to the noon train, and asked "what the boys were up to." He was told; landed his boat on the float and seized a peavey. He peered under the float for a long time; selected a spot, inserted the instrument, and then squatted until he was closed up like a jackknife with the ash handle over the shoulder. He took a deep breath, gave one

great heave and the float slid free. He laid down the peavey, wiped his hands and surveyed the other three men who were standing open-mouthed. "When I git mad," he remarked, "I am stout." There was not only an example of tremendous muscular power, but the perfect application of it gained through years spent as a lumberjack.

One of the stories of Alvah's early days which the writer has heard him tell in Waterside in late October was of an unpremeditated moose hunt in which he, the late Jim Emerson and Nathaniel Emery, grandfather of Jerry W. Emery, participated. It is too long to insert in detail in these recollections, but it was a thriller and with a number of comical aspects. They had no intention of hunting moose until they encountered this cow. Cole and Emerson were hunting partridge and Emery was chopping wood. The latter dropped his ax and all went just as they were. They pursued the animal for two days and two nights, sleeping out with no protection and, having finally slain the beast with a 38-caliber pistol, found themselves lost, nor did any of their families have the faintest idea where they were. Where they were was in Columbia Townshop, miles up the Connecticut River. Moose, by the way, of both sexes were strictly protected in the State at that time and they had considerable difficulty in getting the head and meat back to Groveton undiscovered.

Alvah never had but one child, a little boy who died in infancy. A man like him should have had a dozen sons. His wife was extremely quiet and reticent and mixed little with the campers. Her health was always poor and no one knew her very well save the writer and one or two others. Alvah, as has been stated, served in the State legislature with credit. Following his retirement as superintendent, he bought a car and took two long motor trips, each with a companion, in which he covered nearly the whole United States. He was nearing seventy at the time. He remarked that he had had to work hard and stay close to home all his life and he wanted to see something of his country before he died. As is known to most readers of this characterization, photographs of both Steve and Alvah in their prime hang in the Casino at Camp Percy. In features Alvah resembled a hawk, with aquiline nose and very deep-set eyes. He wore a mustache only. He was a remarkably well-preserved man until he died. He was

inclined to be reticent at most times but in congenial surroundings and before a small group he knew well he occasionally would talk freely in a most entertaining manner. He was as modest as he was competent, which is saying a great deal.

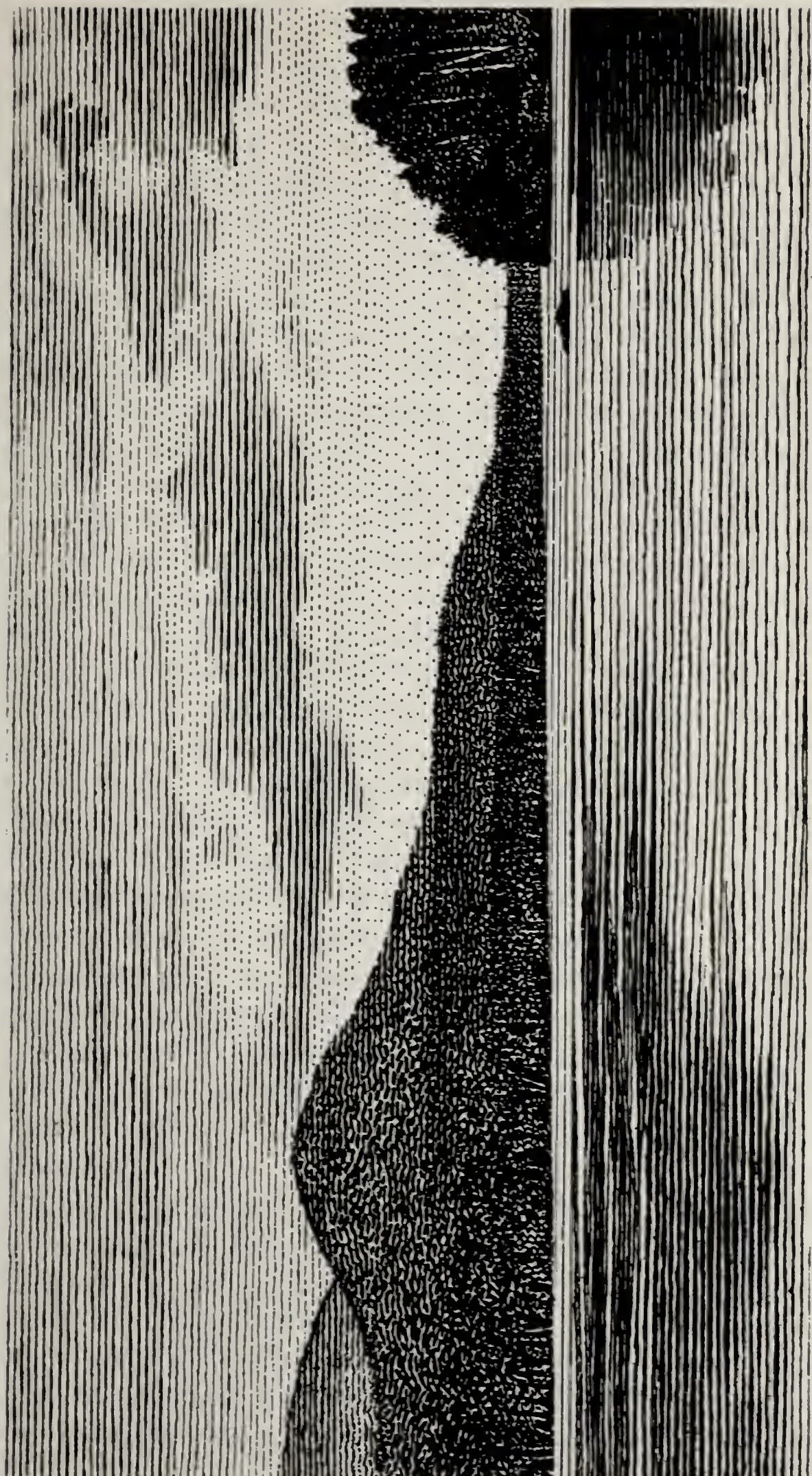
To revert to Steve Crawford: As he has said, the writer as a boy was thrown with him a good deal and on occasion boarded at Crawford Lodge. He had read with amazement of the size and strength of the almost-legendary Ethan Crawford, often termed "The Giant of the Hills", namesake of the Notch, the Mountain and the various hotels. In one book, by a well-known author, it was stated that all the sons of Abel Crawford, Steve's grandfather, were giants and that Ethan, the tallest, "towered nearly seven feet in height". One day he asked Steve about this. The old man spat contemptuously and answered:

"When I was a boy at the old family farm I saw my mother (Lucy Howe Crawford, a fit helpmeet for her heroic husband) measure father, standing in his stocking-feet against a door jamb."

"Was he nearly seven feet?"

Again Steve spat and cackled: "He was exactly six feet two inches tall and not a damned inch taller!" Of course that made him a big man, but far from being a giant.

Asked about his father's traditional feats of strength, Steve said some were apocryphal, but plenty were true and the old man could recall seeing his father performing some almost incredible deeds. Once when the two were together they came on a gang of men vainly trying to roll a huge boulder out of the road. Ethan asked the foreman what he would do for him in return if he could move it single-handed. The boss said no man could do it, but he would forgive him his entire year's road tax, then customarily paid in the form of day labor. Seizing a crow-bar, Ethan waved the rest back and alone rolled the boulder down-hill. Steve remembered seeing Ethan come in late one autumn night with a fair-sized bear cub, dead, and with feet trussed, across his shoulders. He had trapped it and clubbed it, but it revived; got a paw loose and tore the captor's vest to shreds. Angered, he had grasped it by fore and hind feet and slammed it overhead to the ground with such force that the impact had killed it.



The boy remarked that he supposed such a powerful man had lived to be very old. Not so, said Steve; he had died in his fifties, worn out by the strain he had put on the powerful constitution Nature gave him.

No picture, as far as the writer knows, is extant of Ethan, but a drawing, apparently from a daguerreotype, of Abel exists and the resemblance Steve bore to his grandfather is striking. The eldest son of Ethan, Ethan Allen, Jr., was more burly than Steve and was in both youth and old age a remarkably handsome man. Steve and Ethan were both strong characters and Steve was rather quarrelsome, so that for years they did not speak. Yet Steve would brag about Ethan's ability as an angler and as a driver of horses. In the days when outsiders fishing on Christine Lake were regarded as "poachers", nothing pleased Ethan more than to catch a mess of trout right under Steve's nose and Steve would retaliate by finding and hiding Ethan's flat-bottomed scow. The writer can recall the old man, seated in a kitchen chair, chumming the fish liberally, and making great catches of small brook trout in which the lake then abounded. He suffered from a hernia and could do no hard work, but was an inveterate and skillful pickerel fisherman. He would catch a barrellful from the Connecticut and take them to Lancaster, his home, and sell them. His house, a big square white frame double-house, was afterward the Butterfly Tea Shop, run by his granddaughter, Mrs. Bilodeau.

William Crawford so closely resembled Steve that the first time the writer, as a boy, ever saw him, which was at Jefferson, he thought it was Steve in the flesh. The writer called on him in Lancaster when he was past ninety and the resemblance still was startling,—size, mannerisms, features, beard and all. Both were marked by very large, powerful hands, and small and well-shaped feet.

A Washington artist, friend of the writer's mother, made a water-color sketch of Steve about 1899 when he was old, with a shock of white hair and untrimmed beard. The writer owns it now and it is a fine likeness. He posed in Waterside one rainy day, clad in his blue shirt, vest and rubber boots. As the light waned, the artist remarked she had done all she could and thanked him. Without a word he clapped on his hat and started off to milk. Mrs. Rudolph Kauffmann, then mistress of Waterside, said, "Steve Crawford, aren't you, after

posing patiently for two hours, going even to look at what Miss Perrie has done?" Steve returned, took a long look and was silent. "Well?", asked his hostess. "Humph; favors Brother William", was his sole comment. It was really a typical Yankee compliment, but of course the artist did not know of the remarkable resemblance.

Stories about Steve and incidents in which he took part are legion. He will recur from time to time in these mental rambles.

To leave the Crawford family for a while, the writer can remember, as has been said, a good many changes in Percy Village and in the town of Stark. Many of their residents were perfectly ordinary people, but a good many were what is known as "characters" in the old days. George Smith, the local Lumber Company's factor, was probably the leading citizen and he wielded, naturally, a good deal of influence. On the whole he was a good friend of the Club but he and Steve never hit it off. Steve once summed him up in the following phrase: "George Smith:—will tell the truth for fifty cents; will tell a lie for nothing." George was a great churchman, at least on Sundays.

The writer can remember meeting Joshua Roberts, whose name figures so largely in the history of Camp Percy written by Mr. George P. Rowell about 1906. He lived on what was then, and still is, the last farm up the Phillips Brook Valley before one comes to the lumber settlement known as Siberia. Josh was very old then and died soon after. Thus the writer knew both men who were so greatly involved in the establishment of the Percy Summer Club. The farmhouse of Josh's brother Dan was a little to the south and was situated just before one reaches the farm of Andrew Leighton on the road over the hill to the juncture of Phillips and Roberts Brooks. The house was standing until about 1925 but now there is not a trace of it. In the center was an enormous old double-faced chimney with brick ovens built in on the sides. When cook stoves came in, these fire places were boarded up, but they were observable when the house was partly dismantled and the wife of the writer has a pair of ancient andirons which came therefrom.

A favorite character of the writer and of all the campers in the old days was Henri Randolph Girard. Girard used to

say, "My fadder was born in de Island of Jersey, my mudder was Irish and I was born in Canady and if dat don't make a Frenchman I dunno what does." He was a dapper, handsome, kind-hearted and very opinionated Frenchman. He married rather late in life and his wife died a few years later. As a widower he kept house all alone. From the early 1880's until his death about 1919 he kept the village store in Percy and a highly unusual place it was. When he wanted a new garment, he took it out of stock. He threw all his soiled clothes in a spare bedroom and had one big washing done once a year. When he wanted to go fishing he closed up the store and went, and people who were out of anything were also out of luck. Girard loved children. He kept in his candy counter a tiny glass measure and when a little boy or girl came in for its mother's modest order, he always filled this receptacle with vari-colored candies like pills and poured it into the youngster's hand. For years he would not stock the flanged sinkers that many brook fishermen like, but was finally persuaded to do so. When the writer arrived at Camp the following season there were no sinkers. When questioned, Girard replied, "Max, I ordered a gross of dem sinkers mostly for you, but every time a kid come in he'd say 'Hey, Randolph, gimme a sinker;' and you know it's a damn mean man dat won't give a kid a sinker, so you'll just have to take de split-shot." Once Girard was lunching with the writer alone in Camp and was taken to see White Birch lodge where he had worked as choreman many years before. The Whitmarsh family took him all around and showed him several unusual structural features. He seemed not impressed. Finally Mrs. Whitmarsh said, "Mr. Girard, were you ever in this cottage before?" "Yes Mam, I built it," came the answer with a dead-pan expression. As a matter of fact, he had assisted greatly in its construction.

On the one hundred-acre tract of land west of the Club holdings, of which the writer owns a part, there was, until about a dozen years ago, a large sugar camp which at one time had been well equipped. It was constructed of the timbers and boards which once had composed the barn of Daniel Potter, situated many years ago in "Dan's Field", the ancient clearing, now overgrown, known to most campers. George Smith of Percy moved the material to the new location and erected a commodious sugar shed, with enormous

boiler, big cupola, many sap buckets and other appurtenances. It was used every spring for a number of years and a good many people known to the writer participated in the activities. However, he was never in camp at sugar making time and so cannot claim that he ever saw a sugar camp in operation. The building has been torn down and some of the beams and other lumber have been brought to camp and there utilized. Aside from these, all that the writer has as a memento of the last sugar camp that he knew about is a few ancient hand-made sap pails. The sugar maple grove which furnished the sap was hard hit by the hurricane of 1938 but, such as it is, it is still in the possession of the writer and other members of his family. Thirty and more years ago the maple sugar used on the table at Waterside came from this Camp.

At this writing there still lives in Percy a Mr. Henry Pike, good friend of the Club and a life-long friend of the writer, as are all his family. His twin brother, Hubbard Pike, (of whom there is a picture in the Waterside Log Book) was one of those physical marvels you read about. For many years he held the record for rowing the length of the Lake in a Rangeley boat until, in the late 1930's, this record was shaded by the writer's eldest son. Hub Pike is alleged to have trundled a wheelbarrow to the top of the North Peak over a trail then much rougher than it was later on; filled it with blueberries and wheeled it down the mountain.

Although not a regular resident of Percy Village, Simeon Veazie was the boss of the woods in charge of early lumber camps in the valley around the headwaters of Rowell Brook. He was a small, active and very dapper man. Clad in a long red mackinaw shirt and Stetson hat he made the rounds of his operations on a little pony, something like a mustang, and he looked as if he had stepped out of a Frederick Remington painting. Sim lived until 1944 or 1945, when he died as the oldest man in Stark, past ninety. Speaking of age, there was always a rivalry between Si Lunn and old Justus Potter as to who was the older. Each one confidentially informed the writer as a boy that he could remember when the other one was born. As a matter of fact, they were about the same age. Justus was the father of the campers' old friend (who died in 1947 past ninety) Don Potter. His real name was Adonno. Don worked at almost every lodge in Camp

and was a great favorite. Old Justus was an exceedingly active man and in the hayfield at eighty set a pace which his son and his nephews found it hard to follow. One of the latter, Charlie, told the writer that he had put in such a day with his uncle from sunrise to sunset. After supper the uncle suggested that they take a walk up the road to Girard's store. Very tired, but ashamed to let the old man outdo him, Charlie joined him in this 4-mile hike. Justus had a "visit" with the store loafers; bought himself a nickel plug of tobacco, and after the walk home remarked, "Charlie, ain't we had fun tonight?" Charlie was not enthused. The old man ran out of tobacco one winter for a while and, before he could replenish his stock, he smoked up all the wormwood which Don's wife had drying in the attic.

In those days Biblical names were popular and also rather fancy ones. In the Potter family were Aaron and Abijah, as well as Justus and Adonno. Don Potter had a magnificent bass voice and sang in the choir in the old Methodist Church at Stark, still standing. Forty years afterwards the writer heard his voice roll out the same old hymns on the occasion of an Old Home Sunday. When Don had finished his day's work at Camp, there remained nothing for him to do but row a third of a mile; walk nearly two miles; milk his own cows and do his own chores. When he started across the lake he usually struck up some lovely old hymn like "Abide With Me," or "Rock of Ages" which, with its echoes, made a beautiful sound. Once the writer called to him and asked him if he would please sing, this being for the benefit of some visitors at Waterside. Don waved his hand; cleared his throat, and broke out with "In the Shade of the Old Apple Tree, Sat Adam with Eve on His Knee."

A while ago mention was made of old Mr. Potter's "good time." Good times, as city folks knew them, did not exist in the valley in the early days. Roads were bad and there was no entertainment as readers of this know it. There were "grange" meetings and an occasional revival and an occasional husking or a quilting bee, but little else except dances. The North Country people were, and still are, fond of dancing and would travel many a mile in terrible weather to disport themselves for hours. Steve Crawford was one of the best dancers in Coos County. Living alone in Crawford Lodge he

would make himself presentable and drive his sleigh in sub-zero weather alone to Lancaster, eighteen miles away, to a dance. He would change his big felt boots to heavily embroidered carpet slippers, which served him as ballroom pumps, and his activities on the floor were said to be amazing. It is said that he was almost the last man in this neighborhood who could cut a genuine 'pigeon-wing." In 1901 Steve came to President McKinley's second inauguration and at the Inaugural Ball danced a waltz most creditably with Miss Caroline M. Platt.

Orchestras traveled from town to town and even today still do so, but the dances and the music have changed notably. The writer remembers attending a dance at the Stark Town Hall in 1918 at which old and modern dances alternated. He himself could participate only in the two-step, waltz and 'foxtrot. Every other dance was a square dance and some of them were amazingly intricate and evidently very old. A figure caller clad in moccasins guided the various steps and the writer and his friends sat open-mouthed at the ability of the local residents. He remembers that seated in the chairs surrounding the floor were no fewer than eight former Waterside cooks, all his good friends.

When Mr. Charles N. Kent built the Casino at Camp Percy in 1887, a ball was held to open it. Participants were campers and local residents alike and it seems to have been a most successful and unusual affair. Uncle Justus Potter lugged in his "bull fiddle" and was the nucleus for the rest of the local orchestra. Of course Steve Crawford was in rare form that night.

There was little education in the valley in those days, except for the country District schools. The High schools at Groveton, Berlin and Lancaster were too far off for most children to attend. However, Waterside had one chore boy about 1895 who confided to the writer that his ambition was to go to college. When asked which college, he stated: "Well, I'd like to go to Hahvahd, but I suppose I will have to put up with Ammust." This made, naturally, a great hit with the writer's father who had graduated from Amherst twenty years before.

To revert to Waterside cooks from the neighborhood: The writer can remember most of them and here are the names

of some of the worthy women who fed hungry fishermen three times a day:

Bertha Wentworth

Mrs. Joseph Montgomery (later Mrs. Warren Sessions)

Alice Emery

Mrs. Green and her son, Ozro, for helper

Mrs. Oleson

Susan Jackson

Ollie Montgomery

Elsie Coburn

Alice Rogers Hodgkins

Effie Cole Spreadbury (later Mrs. W. N. Emery)

Mabel Pike Smith, and

Malvina Ludovina Bennett, together with her sister,
Cloffie Deary.

The one mentioned now has the closest association with this Lodge of anyone—Lennie Ellingwood Cole, wife of Ira Cole, who was the son of Woodbury Cole, mentioned earlier. Lennie, who was the prototype of everything a New England housewife should be and who had all the ability and versatility of a pioneer woman, first looked after the writer's sister and took care of him and his bride on their first trip together at Camp. Year after year she came and she holds today (for she is still living in Colorado) the admiration and real affection of every member of the writer's family.

The modern country doctor who whizzes all over the North Country in his car is a worthy replacement of the old type doctor who covered his sick list by sleigh, on horseback, and even on snow shoes. They may have been rough and ready, but they got there, and vast was their experience. Heading the list, and the writer's admirable acquaintance, was the late William H. Leith, who was the perfect example of the good country doctor. He died a few years ago and many a good fishing trip with him has been enjoyed by members of the writer's family. Other doctors of the past were O'Brion and Hight of Groveton. Steve Crawford's great nephew, Rollin Webb, is now among the oldest practitioners in Lancaster. He and the writer did chores at camp together in 1900.

In the list of Waterside cooks is noted a Mrs. Jackson, usually referred to as Aunt Susan or Sister Jackson. She was one of a family of at least six sisters, all of whom were born

across the river in an old farm house which must be 150 years old today. Their maiden name was Robbins and they were related in some degree to the north country criminal who is the central figure in the book "Gaut Gurley, or the Trappers of Umbagog." The real name of this villain was Vene Robbins. Curiously enough, Mrs. J. W. Emery is some relation to the Errol trapper whose name was Cloudman and who appears in the book as Codman, one of its heroes. The first of these sisters to come to Waterside was Aunt Judith Potter who was of a melancholy disposition and weighed in her prime 240 pounds. She cooked, washed and ironed and did all the housework for the then small lodge for a dollar a day and was delighted to get it. To see her backing down the loft ladder carrying a heavy slop pail and turning occasionally to participate in the general living room conversation was something to remember. It was from this that we knew that she wore white stockings. She was a fluent speaker. Her choice of words was not always commendable. "Do you want your beef done leathery, or do you want blood on the platter?" is an example. Mrs. Potter was very pious and one summer entertained us constantly with tales of a new Baptist minister at Stark. On the next trip she was asked how he was getting along. She replied: "Come to find out he wa'n't no real Baptist at all. He come to baptize somebody and asked her if she wanted to be dipped, or just poured. Now he's a 'carpenterin' ' and a 'joinerin' ' down to Berlin."

The writer has seen Sister Jackson, the skinny sister, seize a wash tub two-thirds full of water and empty it over the porch rail. She turned and said: "There, Maxie, 'Im 70 years old and hain't I staout?" Another sister was Aunt Charlotte Sawyer, the grandmother of Mrs. John Pepau and her numerous brothers and sisters. Still another was Aunt Hannah Green, spouse of Uncle Ben Green, referred to earlier. Still another was Aunt Lucy Brooks, who in her old age reverted toward savagery and lived in a shack at the little logan, still called "Lucy's Bog." It is alleged that the prototype of Gaut Gurley had Indian blood in him and certainly it showed up in the Robbins family here and there, both in physical appearance and the above conduct of Mrs. Brooks. All of these sisters were large and portly except Mrs. Jackson, but the largest by

far was Sister Abbott, who was the mother of Calvin, Aram and Sylvester Benjamin Silas Abbott, he being named for the three town selectmen at the time of his birth. There was always great curiosity as to how much Sister Abbott really weighed, but this she would never disclose. Once a group of the ladies of Stark village while waiting for the noon train all got on the hay scales and the reading was somewhere between one thousand and two thousand pounds. During the dinner hour one of the ladies had an inspiration and she sent her small son to all the houses involved, save that of Mrs. Abbott. These ladies gathered quietly at the station by devious routes, got on the hay scales, weighed themselves en masse, and subtracted that total from the previous one. "And how much did she weigh?" the writer asked Mrs. Alvah Cole, who was a girl at the time. "She weighed 250 pounds" was the reply.

When the Percy Summer Club was started a crippled Irishman named Patrick J. O'Connor was the station agent and he so remained for many years. He had at least 8 children of his own. However, inasmuch as he had a free and fairly ample home, he adopted no fewer than four more and raised them all to be worthy citizens. Several of them became telegraphers. He and his family were in the van of the movement which built the little Catholic Church, called "The Church of the Holy Angels," at Percy. It later fell into disrepair, but a few years ago was entirely renovated through the generosity of some generous Catholics and all the campers who could make the trip were at the impressive re-dedication. It has been an agreeable experience to cross the lake and descend the hill in the mist of early morning and attend mass there. Very often the celebrant has been the Very Reverend Arthur A. O'Leary, S.J., former President of Georgetown University and beloved of all campers, Protestant and Catholic alike. When the writer was a boy the bells of two churches pealed through the little valley. It is a pleasant sound today to hear one of them again, summoning the faithful to worship. The Methodist Church at Stark holds services only occasionally.

Back we go to Steve Crawford: He quarreled with most of the nearby residents but in those days he had unusual powers of patronage and he got away with it. He did more or less as he pleased toward the end of his service.

I have told of his differences with his brother, Ethan, whom he would praise in one breath and describe as "a fish hog" in the next. The writer wishes that authors of modern angling books could have seen Steve when he was out to get a mess of trout for arriving campers. Anchored, usually in the "Pork Barrel" (which he had named) he sat on the middle thwart. In each fist was a hand line, and propped out from the boat like spinnaker-booms were two fourteen-foot bamboo poles. If the trout were biting, there was never a dull moment. He gave them no play but snagged them into the boat, unhooked them and threw them alive onto the bottom.

About 1930, as has been stated, the writer had a pleasant afternoon visit with William Crawford, the sole surviving brother. William remarked that he and his nephew Fred used to come up to the lake to help Steve take trout from the spawning beds for propagation purposes. "We were supposed to put them in a rearing pond," chuckled the ancient William, "What we done was to box them all up and send them down to George P. Rowell to eat in New York." His remarks concluded with the characteristic Crawford chuckle, which was more like a cackle.

The writer's first trip after pickerel was taken at the age of thirteen with Steve. We walked along the Ammonoosuc river whose banks were then very much more open than they are today and at the end of a long afternoon Steve had eleven fine fish, all taken by skittering an ordinary pork rind which he himself had cut from his barrel of pork. The writer, although he had a master to imitate, took no fish whatever. Steve would fish for trout for friends from morning to night, or cheerfully boat them, but he disliked trout to eat and once in a long while would go off on a pickerel orgy.

The writer can remember the last big coaching parade held in Lancaster. These were features for years of the various mountain centers. There were Concord coaches, buckboards, horsemen and fox hounds and it was all very wonderful, especially the four-, six- and even eight-horse teams. He went with Steve and Effie Spreadbury in Steve's buggy. As a particularly fine team came by, managed by the old whip Freeman Lindsay, the boy exclaimed in admiration. Steve, who loathed Ethan, popped out with, "My brother Ethan can drive six hosses as well as any man in New Hampshire!" Steve



and the writer for years had a date to climb Mt. Washington on foot together, but they never got around to it. He was really too old, though spry, and the writer too fat and too lazy.

"Could this be an equinoctial storm?" asked the artist who painted his picture. "Sartin, sartin. We git lots of them equinoctial storms every summer."

It was Steve, as far as the Campers know, who christened the slicks, which all waters have, "logging roads." Seated on top of the Giant's Grove and looking down on the lake, he told an inquisitive and pestiferous young man (Princeton '89) that these showed where logs had been hauled over the ice in the preceding winter—and the student believed him!

Steve had been a cook in the Civil War and it is doubted if he ever smelled powder. The late Henry Clay Evans, U. S. Commissioner of Pensions, visited Camp in 1899. Steve promptly invited him to go on a lengthy boat ride during which he persuaded Mr. Evans to increase his war pension. Steve overlooked few bets.

In a town like Stark there are always a few unusual characters, some of them not closely connected with any family. This town has rejoiced in a number of such, all of them interesting and some of them most agreeable. When Alvah Cole accepted the offer to become the second Superintendent of The Percy Summer Club in 1901, he brought to Crawford Lodge with him an old man whom none of the campers knew. It developed that his name was Leonard Potter. When asked, Alvah stated that he was no relation and let it go at that. Old Mr. Potter was striking looking, resembling an Old Testament prophet with snowy hair and beard and a beaked nose. He was deaf, gentle, sweet, retiring and, considering his age, industrious. Each day he would row himself slowly across the lake and chop firewood, and by keeping at this almost the year around he supplied the then five lodges. No one knew him well or could draw him out much. After a number of years he died in his 80's. Later the story came out. Alvah's father had died when he was sixteen, leaving him the man of the family with a mother, brothers and sisters to support and a farm to manage. He found it tough going and was greatly and regularly helped by a prosperous nearby farmer, this same Leonard Potter. Many years later, Potter lost all his family and suffered reverses which included the loss of his

farm. The boy whom he had befriended, then the leading citizen of the town, took him in and old Mr. Potter had a happy and congenial home with Alvah and his wife for as long as the Lord spared him.

Once when the writer, in his youth, was in camp alone with Aunt Louisa Montgomery (Sessions) cooking for him, he surprised old Mr. Potter at the kitchen door. His mouth was very full, and when he had swallowed its contents, he almost blushed and a far away look came into his mild blue eyes. With a smile just like that of a little boy he remarked apologetically, "Mother always said I was a gre't hand for cookies." The writer wonders if any human being who ever ate one of Mrs. Montgomery's freshly baked confections would have failed to become at that moment "a gre't hand for cookies."

For years two brothers, both known to most campers, lived more or less in Percy. They were Christopher and Joseph Corum. They never worked if they could help it and subsisted largely on pork and fish, including suckers and a little garden produce. Their firewood they obtained partly by the simple expedient of throwing a boom across the river and salvaging the driftwood. They had a camp on South Pond, a disused lumber camp, in which they lived for weeks at a time. They had a house in Percy not much better, in the chicken house of which Joe Corum performed prodigies of home brewing during prohibition. Chris had lately died and Joe got out of town between two suns when the authorities closed in on him. Chris was slow witted and lacked personality, but Joe had real charm. He was huge in size and picturesque in his appearance. His features and coloring showed plainly his French and Indian blood and anyone encountering him for the first time would get the impression that here was a dangerous man who lived largely on raw meat. As a matter of fact, although he liked to hunt, he cared little for game to eat. His passion was flowers and many a time the writer has seen him walking along the road tenderly holding and pondering a white water lily he had plucked. The writer knew Joe for thirty-five years. Joe may be alive yet. Like many lazy men, he had enormous strength. The writer remembers as a boy seeing a restive horse hitched to a light buggy start prancing in all the preliminaries of a run-away. Joe lacked time to reach the horse's bridle so he grabbed the

rear axle of the buggy. Every time the horse yanked the buggy forward, Joe yanked both horse and buggy backward until the horse gave up. New Englanders are somewhat famed for their lack of public expression of affection or interest. Years ago the writer saw Chris come in from South Pond. He encountered Joe in Girard's store and said, "Joe, your brother Chris is in town; thought you might like to know it." "Yes, yes, he amounts to jest about as little as I do," was he reply.

Still alive and still liked and admired by all campers who know him is Hazen Cole. He lived on the North Shore of the river alone with his invalid mother as long as she was alive and took care of her. At this writing he is lame and rather inactive. Hazen in his prime was a remarkable man, both as to his gentleness of disposition and his amazing versatility. There was absolutely nothing that that man could not accomplish with his hands. The writer and his sons firmly believe that he could have taken a clock apart and put it together again, using only an ax. He used to grind the ancient millstone, now back of Waterside Lodge, when it was in operation at Crystal Village. He has had a hand in a great many camp projects. The first large motor boat of the Club, purchased in 1920, was a disused sailboat. After a year or two it was decided to replace its unsatisfactory one-lung marine engine with a second-hand Ford car engine which Superintendent Emery had purchased cheaply. A boat expert assured Jerry that this was an utter impossibility. "Now, good, Jerry; that's jest the sort of talk I love to hear," remarked Hazen, "let's go ahead and put her in," which they promptly did and with foot pedals still sticking out, it ran the boat successfully for a number of years. Since his mother's death, the campers have seen little of Hazen, but at present he is making his home with Jerry's brother, Amos, on the farm where Jerry was born and helping with the chores as much as he is able. He is welcome wherever he goes.

Already the writer is certain that some readers he may have are struck with the frequency of names such as Cole, Potter, Pike, Emery and so forth, and particularly of Cole and Potter. Four Coles were among the original incorporators of the town. Mr. Rowell could remember when the town contained 80 men, women and children named Potter. The writer can remember

seeing the election check-list at Girard's store with 16 male voters on it all named Cole.

Of all the families in the town of Stark, the Emerys are among the largest, if not the very largest, and the writer has left them until the last. This is because of a long and close association with many members of the clan and also because of the position of importance held in the lives of several generations of campers by Jerry W. Emery, who became the fourth Superintendent of the Percy Summer Club in 1922. Between Alvah Cole and Jerry, a man named Francis L. Dinsmore served for a brief interval. Jerry first came to camp as a choreboy of 15 and worked at Waterside. Later he was Assistant Superintendent under Mr. Cole. So for decades he has played an important part in the lives of all the campers as well as in the affairs of the town. Jerry's uncle, William Nathaniel Emery, was the first man hired by Steve Crawford to work for the newly established Club, whose buildings at that time consisted of one small hatching house in Helen Bay. Will has worked at every one of the seven lodges and was always in demand. He served at Grey Rock Lodge every summer from 1897 until failing health caused him to leave a few years ago. At the time of his retirement to his little farm he had carried in his arms every young child and baby who came to camp as a member of one of the regular camping families. Almost the earliest recollection of the writer is jumping off the second or third rung of a ladder which led to the loft in old Waterside and into Will's arms. Will has taken care of the writer's father on his short vacations when the latter was a young man, not only guiding but cooking for him. He has carried in his arms the writer's children and has held all but one of his grandchildren. He has done approximately the same with the other families, so one can imagine how he rates in our estimation.

To go back: The first member of this family came up into Stark from Manchester about 100 years ago. He was Nathaniel Emery, or "Uncle Nat" as he was known to most. He was rather short and chunky in stature but was a man of noteworthy physical strength and stamina. For example, on his death bed and in delirium, it was all that four grown sons could do to keep him in bed. Earlier in these recollections he is mentioned as having taken part in the long-ago moose

the first of these is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The second is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The third is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The fourth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The fifth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The sixth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The seventh is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The eighth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The ninth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The tenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The eleventh is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twelfth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The thirteenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The fourteenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The fifteenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The sixteenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The seventeenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The eighteenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The nineteenth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twentieth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twenty-first is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twenty-second is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twenty-third is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twenty-fourth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twenty-fifth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twenty-sixth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twenty-seventh is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twenty-eighth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The twenty-ninth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

The thirtieth is the fact that the system is not in equilibrium.

hunt. He was chopping wood when the hunters passed and was not dressed for traveling as were the others, but simply put on his jacket and joined the party. They had no blankets and the younger men were up nearly all night trying to keep warm. However Alvah Cole says that Uncle Nat seemed to rest with reasonable comfort on a handful of fir boughs in a hollow in the snow which he had scooped out with his snowshoes. Uncle Nat married four times but had children by only the first two wives. By his first marriage he had Will, Albert (Jerry's father), John and Louisa, later Mrs. Montgomery-Sessions. There were others, but these we know the best. By his second marriage he had Bert, Louis and one or more daughters. Bert, Will's half-brother, has worked at Camp as Assistant Superintendent and choreman and has always been a remarkably able man. All of Nat's children seemed to have inherited his stamina. The writer remembers Nat, so that he has known five generations of that family, as they have known five generations of his. Bert was one of the most expert and indefatigable hunters in Stark in his younger days and nearly always got deer; often a bear, and occasionally bob-cats. The two sons and the daughter of Mrs. Sessions are all good friends of the Club and have been much at camp. There are J. Edward, of Percy, Harold, of Groveton and Mary McMahan, of Groveton.

Albert never worked at the Club but was always a good friend and excellent neighbor. He was merry, industrious, intelligent and independent. His physical powers were amazing for a small man. When he was past eighty he used to hunt with his sons and a grandson in deer season and could just about "walk the legs off them." He died a few years ago to the regret of us all. His elder son, Amos, who has also worked at camp, lives with his mother. Alice, his daughter, now Mrs. McFarland, lives in Groveton and has several nice children, two of whom have worked at camp. Another brother, James, lives in Groveton with his estimable family. Three of Bert's sons and two of his daughters, as well as a son-in-law and a grandson, have all worked at Camp in various capacities, so it is apparent that the Percy Summer Club and the Emery family go with each other like "ham and eggs."

We all think a great deal of them and they seem to like us, and it has all been a very happy association through more than sixty years.

In these recollections the writer thinks that it may not be out of place to touch upon the courtship of Will Emery, oldest acquaintance of all the campers, whatever their age. This story, an example of constancy in the face of adversity, is known to some of the older of them, but it carries an appeal which seems to make it worth noting. New Englanders are not communicative about affairs of the heart and it took a number of years and piece-meal information for the writer to get the story sufficiently straight to put it down here. It may be that there are some errors in it, but according to the best of his information it is this:

In his youth, Will fell in love with Effie Cole, daughter of Nelson Cole, a near neighbor. How much court he paid her no one now knows except Will himself, but the lady failed to recognize the true worth of this suitor and married a dashing lumberjack named Spreadbury. Most people, including Will, knew he was unworthy and so he shortly demonstrated. He just walked off and left her and their small daughter. This was in the 1880's. Will bided his time and remained unmarried, although most personable and agreeable himself. He wisely did not try to hurry Effie into a second marriage, but occupied all his spare time with the construction of a house, the one in which he lives at this writing and which he built practically unaided. It took him several years, especially as he equipped it with a good many special conveniences, the ideas for which he must have gotten from the camp lodges. When the psychological time came, armed with an affectionate and faithful heart and with the completed house as an asset, he finally persuaded Effie to marry him, and they were an exceptionally happy couple until her death a few years ago. According to the best recollection of the writer, Will did not persuade Effie to marry him for seven or eight years after the disappearance of her first husband. Effie is mentioned elsewhere in these reminiscences. Nell Spreadbury became to him as his own daughter and he and Effie later had a daughter of their own.

Two people more equable and cheerful and philosophical in mind and more happy in disposition would be hard to find

and their congeniality, once the matter was settled in Will's favor, was noteworthy all during their married life. The writer will testify that he never knew any woman who was jollier or better company than Effie Emery.

Will's early life was unusual in that he ran away from home at the age of five or six and never returned. He did not run far, only a "piece" up the road to the house of a neighbor who had been kind to him. Something about the domestic setup in his father's house did not entirely suit him so, at this tender age, he pulled up stakes and left. He walked to the neighbor's house, and announced that he had come to live with them. The neighbor thought it was just a boyish whim and took him in, probably laughing to himself. He stayed on, made himself useful, and there he lived until he became a man. After a due interval Willie's father came to the neighbor's house and told the boy it was time to come home. "Hain't comin' home. It suits me here and I'm a-goin' to stay right here," he told his father and that concluded the matter. Of course, later he did not stay there much for he was a lumber jack and a carpenter and could turn his hand to anything, but his neighbor's house was the place he called "Home," until the old man died.

Before leaving the Emery family, the writer wishes to say a few words about the truly remarkable wife of J. W. Emery, Mrs. Katherine Farwell Emery. Not that what he has to say will be news to most of his readers, but because he is so impressed with the character and attainments of this woman whom he has known well for a quarter of a century. There is apparently nothing that she does not know how to do, or at least, how it should be done. She is a storehouse of domestic knowledge handed down from her parents and grandparents and all focused in her. Her knowledge of botany and zoology and the habits of the wild things of the north woods is noteworthy. She is one of the most observant human beings the writer has ever known and her knowledge of local families and local happenings is complete. As all campers know, even the most casual and brief chat with Mrs. Emery invariably produces some piece of information of value or interest to her visitor. She has taught school; is well read; is highly regarded in all town circles, especially educational, and as a helpmate to her husband during the years of his superintendency she

has been exemplary. All of the Emerys whom the writer has known have married well, but Jerry, the writer thinks, won first prize. The writer believes that, were the calendar turned back suddenly one hundred years, Kate Emery could make about the best "go" of life in the north country of anyone he has ever known. She was born over in the town of Dummer on a hill from which she could see a little bit of Christine Lake. She remembers as a little girl asking her grandmother what that distant speck of blue was and her grandmother informing her. She never saw the lake until she was grown up and now its shores have been her successful home for a quarter of a century.

From her grandmother, Kate, as a small girl, inherited a store of valuable information about medicinal herbs and other plants which were found beneficial by that ancestor and by her neighbors back in the early days when the nearest doctor was miles away and the roads often impassable. The grandmother had learned about them from old Indian or half-breed men and women whom she knew in her youth.

Northern New England is justly famed for its pithy expressions. Stark people generally have clung to the older ways of speech more than most and some of the very oldest ones now living occasionally use such a word as "gormin," meaning awkward or unwieldy. The Emery family seems to have a gift for this sort of expression, Jerry calls an adze a "mountain plane." One of his remarks was, "I guess in this case I let my courage outrun my judgment." His slang is not like that of anyone else; he seems to invent it himself. The earlier generations of the Emery and other families habitually used "be" instead of "am" or "are." But they never misused it for "is," as so many dialect writers do. Albert Emery with his two sturdy horses hauled the old millstone from Crystal right through the woods to Waterside. It was enormously heavy and was lashed between big logs. When complimented on his achievement he remarked, "That wa'n't nuthin'; pack me up a lunch and a bait for these hosses and I'll set it down for you in Washington, D. C."

Before stopping these rambling recollections, the writer will pick up a few loose threads. Indian names are prevalent hereabouts and camp visitors sometimes have had the impression that the noble redman swarmed hereabout. As a matter

of fact there were very few and, like the whites, they had their villages on the "Coos," the natural meadows. Undoubtedly they passed through the Ammonoosuc valley and camped along the river, but they did not linger. They were Abnaki and allied to the Indians of Maine and Vermont. Once a visitor asked us if we found many arrowheads. We replied that we had never seen one. Within five minutes she had picked up one, small and beautifully made, from the old pasture of the Larrabee farm adjacent to our tennis courts. No one else has ever found one and, as far as we actually know, the owner of that projectile was the only Indian ever to set eyes on Christine Lake. Probably hunters in pursuit of deer passed by it, but it was no place to camp. The Indians stuck to the valleys for their travels, first, because they were level and second, because they yielded an abundance of all sorts of fish and fowl. No need to climb a steep hill to catch a trout.

Earlier in these pages the writer has given the names of some of the worthy local ladies who have cooked so successfully at Waterside. Hereunder is a list, more or less chronological, of most of the hired men who did so much to make our early stays there agreeable:

W. N. Emery
Hubbard Pike
Henry Gonya
Adonno Potter
George Veazie
J. W. Emery
Amos Emery

Orvis Oleson
Lawrence O'Connor
Bert M. Emery
Bert M. Emery, Jr.
Francis Gilbert
Roy Cole
Merle Cole

The thick forests which still cover a great part of Stark and adjacent towns are one of the chief charms of that region. With their numerous trails, many of which are well-known to the readers of these recollections, they seem very friendly and indeed, if one uses proper precautions, they are friendly and delightful except, of course, where lumbering has obliterated paths and changed the appearance of the landscape. However, in due time, it all goes back to what it was.

To one who fails to exercise proper precaution, or "lets his courage outrun his judgment," or loses his head in an emergency, these same woods can be very terrible and every once in a while there may come a tragedy or near-tragedy.

The writer remembers that back about 1898 there were two brothers named Banfield working in Percy for the lumber company. The elder was one of the largest and handsomest men the writer has ever seen. He looked like a Greek God in blue denim and could use an ordinary size axe as an average man would handle a hatchet. His younger brother, a youth of about 17, went partridge hunting with a friend in the autumn after the campers had left. They had poor luck; darkness was coming on, and the friend decided he had had enough and would return to Percy. Banfield would not agree and declared he would hunt for about an hour longer. Darkness descended and he failed to re-appear that night or the next morning. When they parted company they were somewhere around the base of the South Percy Peak. By mid-afternoon a crowd of men, including the elder brother, was searching for the boy and twenty-four hours after that the mill and surrounding lumber camps were emptied of personnel and the writer has heard that as many as four hundred men were hunting for the lost hunter. Panic-stricken, he kept moving instead of sitting down, building a good fire and waiting to be rescued. After a few days most of the men had to go back to work, but relatives and close friends still persisted in their search. A week later a man who owned a back farm somewhere in the vicinity saw a tattered figure emerge from the woods into his pasture. Realizing that it was the missing boy, he ran toward him shouting and waving his arms. The boy, undoubtedly out of his mind, turned and ran back into the woods and that was the last seen of him until spring, when his skeleton was found seated beneath a tree, to the limb of which was lashed his shotgun. Undoubtedly in a semi-lucid interval and in desperate physical and mental shape, he had committed suicide, for a charge of shot had gone through his skull. All this happened within a comparatively short distance of the village of Stark and not more than two or three miles at most from a road. The writer knows from experience how near to one's shoulder panic can be under such circumstances.

Only a few summers ago two men from Groveton went to the headwaters of Phillips Brook on a fishing trip. One was a large, heavy man who almost immediately slipped on a wet stone and broke a bone in his leg. His companion im-

provided a splint; left him some drinking water and food, and started out via a short way that leads into Bungay up in Colebrook. There he got a lift; went to Groveton, and secured a rescue crew who dashed back and walked into the brook's headwaters. It took eight or ten strong men working in shifts, hours to carry out on a stretcher the heavy, injured man over a trail which had to be enlarged as they went along. They themselves were exhausted, for they started instantly and with little preparation. Had the weather been bad the suffering of all concerned would have been severe. Many times it is essential that two men take a trip alone, or even for one man to go alone, but if two go they should keep together or in touch, and a threesome is still safer. In case of severe accident one can stay with the injured party and the second can go for help.

The wild life in our woods is interesting and generally harmless. The year of 1947 saw more deer shot in New Hampshire than ever before. Bears are much more common than are generally supposed but they are seldom seen. Alvah Cole never saw a live bear in all his life although he knew he had been within fifteen feet of one. The writer has seen bear but once—a mother and several cubs taking a mud bath on the shores of Witham's Logan, about fifteen years ago. As recently as August, 1947, a Percy man shot a 250-pound black bear on land adjacent to Club property on the slope of Dickey Hill. A good many men known to the writer have seen bears at night while motoring, or have even encountered them on foot, but in every case the bear has shown little disposition to stay around and the writer knows of no resident of Stark who was ever injured by a bear. An occasional lynx has been known to be in the town and bob-cats are reasonably numerous, though seldom seen.

Forest fires are always a menace in dry weather and it is fortunate that New Hampshire largely escaped the fate of portions of Maine in the autumn of 1947. Forty years ago, in 1907, a big forest fire got within a few miles of Groveton and some twelve hundred men were out fighting the blaze. Fortunately for the Ammonoosuc Valley the fire split at some point below Groveton and was finally extinguished, but it might have raged on up through our valley and burned everything in sight, just as has happened in many places to the

north of us. The system of fire stations and forest guards inaugurated since 1907 has done much to lessen this menace, but where there are thick woods there will always be danger.

It is as difficult to keep Steve Crawford out of these writings as it was for Mr. Dick in David Copperfield to keep King Charles' head out of his essays. It is natural, because of the prominent part Steve played in Camp Percy's early and formative years and because of his strong individuality. It has been said that he who sups with the Devil needs a long spoon and whoever boarded or took a meal at Crawford Lodge in the early days had to be prepared for almost anything. Steve largely did his own cooking. Sometimes the meal was a complete dinner and sometimes it consisted of little or nothing, depending on his appetite. One of the South American cousins of the writer declared that Steve once asked him, "Will you have potatoes or coffee for breakfast?" Steve ate in the kitchen and whoever was with him pulled up a chair and fell to. No meal ever passed without the intrusion of dogs and cats, of which Steve was very fond and with which he had a great knack. His poultry also wandered freely in and out of the room and one was likely to be surprised by having a well-grown pullet jump onto the oilcloth. With a backhanded flip of his fist Steve would knock the bird to the floor and go on eating as if nothing had happened. Steve's table manners left a good deal to be desired when he was in his own home. When he craved a certain well-known condiment he would ejaculate: "I'll have some butter and dum quick!"

Steve's fascination for the animals with which he was always closely associated was almost uncanny. One expects a shepherd dog to obey orders and his did, understanding him perfectly. He owned a large and powerful tom-cat which was known to kill and bring into the lodge a full-grown rabbit. The cat followed Steve even in his boat and once was left behind in another boat. From a distance of thirty feet Steve rested on his oars, snapped his fingers and called the cat in a peculiar falsetto which he used with all animals. After a little natural hesitation, the cat leaped overboard and swam to Steve's boat!

Steve ate rapidly and usually showed signs thereof shortly after a meal. His belch or burp was as unique as his per-

sonality. The heavy, basso profundo part was almost entirely self-contained, but following that he gave vent to an indescribable, high-pitched ejaculation of "dipe!" Steve's characterizations of his neighbors were pithy, as evidenced by his opinion of George Smith, recorded hereinbefore. Asked as to what sort of a man and farmer Si Lunn was, he replied after due deliberation, "He's jest the sort that will give his wife green wood to burn in harvest time."

When Mr. and Mrs. Cole came to Crawford Lodge there was a "new deal." They enlarged it and made it into a real and cozy home. Their meals were well-cooked and nicely served and it was a pleasure to board with them for a week or two as the writer has done in his youth. Mr and Mrs. Emery have carried on the improvements still further. Their table is most excellent; their house neat as a pin, and they have added a bath room, a wood furnace, electric lights, ice box, washing machine, etc.

In the early days of Camp it was the duty of the Superintendent to row down the lake and walk to Percy and bring up the mail at least twice a day. The arrival of guests sometimes increased these trips to three, or even four. Also during the more clement months Steve had to row across the lake to milk twice every day. The writer when a boy, figured out roughly how many thousand miles that old man must have rowed in his 20-year stay at Camp. He never rowed fast or seemed to hurry, but he was most adept and few could outlast him. As a boatman for fly fishing he was supreme. Many a neophyte has come in with a good catch of trout flattering himself that he had fished pretty successfully for a beginner. He did not realize that it was Steve's uncanny management of the oars that had a great deal to do with it. With a quick flick of them he could take up the slack in a tyro's line and practically hook the fish for him.

Pat O'Connor, the old Station agent, married a daughter of Uncle Ben Green. On the Green side of the family was a female of noble proportions and vast strength who traveled with circuses and carnivals under the ring name of Flossie LaBlanche. The relations were immensely proud of her billing as "The Strongest Woman in the World" and indeed she must have been one of the most powerful. There exists a snapshot of Flossie seen by the writer in 1947, showing her on all-

fours and supporting a platform on which stood 12 full-grown men. Another shows her in heavy black tights, very daring for the 1880's and indeed in these fleshings she was a figure long to be remembered. In later years Flossie got muscle-bound and also suffered from arthritis. She visited Percy often in the summer and as she strolled slowly and painfully along the road she reminded one of a tank in low speed.

Crippled Pat O'Connor had a brother who teamed up with an Irishman named Enright and at one time they held the double-sculls championship of the world. The writer, who later was to have three sons rowing on Princeton crews, can remember the thrill of being shown a tiny model of the shell in which these two Irishmen won enduring fame. One of the O'Connor boys, Lawrence, inherited his uncle's skill with oars and could handle a Rangeley boat in a most beautiful smooth and powerful style. With him it was a case of strong back and weak mind, for he eventually went crazy and toward the end of his incumbency as village postmaster he used to hand out books of stamps to people he liked, just as Girard used to give away his sinkers.

The little country burying-grounds in and around the town of Stark remind one of the locale of Gray's "Elegy," for here indeed one stumbles on ancient stones "where the rude forefathers of the village sleep." Right by the side of the stone marking the final resting place of some life-long friend recently dead, one will find a marker in honor of "Joshua Roberts, Such-and-Such Regiment, Field Artillery, New Hampshire Volunteers, 1861-1865," or the tablet marking the final resting place of Nathaniel Emery and giving his Civil War Regiment. This little rustic town sent a surprising number of men to the Civil War. Although shrunken in population by the time of World Wars I and II it more than did its duty in those conflicts.

In the early days of New England there were a good many second marriages, especially of second wives. As Don Potter once remarked to the writer's father, "Up in this country a man can't afford to hire both inside and out," meaning that when a farmer lost his wife, economic conditions almost compelled him to take a second and sometimes a third wife. As the writer has remarked elsewhere, Nat Emery had four. A study of the tombstones of some of the women and men lying

in the burying ground at Stark Village shows a large preponderance of Biblical names. There are also a good many "fancy" names of the sort an expectant mother might encounter in a novel or might think of herself. Below is a list of unusual names copied from stones in the Stark Village cemetery:

Gemantha Pike
Eldora Pike
Electa Pike
Avilda Thompson
Dulcena Perkins
Lovina Potter
Fidelia Cole
Rosina Lunn

Ruah Pike
Laurona Cross
Adella Cole
Arvilla Cole
Elwin Thompson
Sereno Farwell
Angie Stevens

At this point it begins to dawn on the writer that he has strung these recollections out about long enough. Being an ardent fisherman himself and knowing that some anglers will read these pages, he will close with a reference to, in his opinion, America's Greatest Fisherman. He is familiar with the accomplishments and the writings of Thad Norris, William C. Prime, Henry Van Dyke, Eugene V. Connett, George La Branche, Ray Bergman and other experts too numerous to mention whose achievements are nationally known. But, in his opinion, a nine-year old French boy residing in Percy about the turn of the century should be awarded the palm. His name was Johnny Aubin (pronounced locally "Obah"). Naturally he was a bait fisherman who followed up small brooks. He attended the village school a furlong east of Percy. About the time school let out for the summer he discovered in a big hole in Pike's Brook, nearly a mile east of Percy, a trout monstrous for such a small stream. He hooked him and he lost him and a few days later he did it again, and a few days later still again. By this time other juvenile anglers got after the fish, but he was not to be tempted and they soon gave up.

Johnny, however, was never discouraged and on every single weekday of the summer he hoofed it through the dust or the mud to that particular pool and tried to catch that particular fish. He used every bait known to him and he tried experimental baits; nothing doing. Occasionally he would see the trout and know that he was there, for a fish of that size is

likely to remain in a good hole until autumn. The village elders used to jeer at Johnny. Hardly a day passed when someone failed to say, "You ketched that traout yit, Johnny?" Johnny would rub his big toe in the dust and half hang his head and reply, "Not yit, but I'll git him!" The last day of vacation came. It was toward sunset and a group of adults were gathered in front of the Post Office. Up the road came a cloud of dust in the middle of which was the figure of Johnny running at top speed. Clutched in his hand was the great fish. The villagers advanced toward him to inquire and to congratulate, but he plowed through them without a glance or a word. Still at a gallop he ran into Girard's Store; slapped the slimy trout on the counter and in gasping tones ejaculated, "There, by Jesus, Randolph, weigh that one." It may be added that the fish weighed in the neighborhood of a pound, which was indeed a trout of vast proportions from such a tiny streamlet. For patience, perseverance and optimism, not to mention a high degree of skill, the writer gives you Johnny Aubin.



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